

Message Text

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ACTION ACDA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 ERDA-05 CIAE-00 H-02 INR-07

IO-10 L-02 NSAE-00 OIC-02 OMB-01 PA-01 PM-03 PRS-01

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BIB-01 NRC-05 /093 W

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R 031333Z APR 75

FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9119

INFO SECDEF WASHDC

AMEMBASSY LONDON

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

USDEL MBFR VIENNA

USNMR SHAPE

CINC EUR VAIHINGEN

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 BONN 05334

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR, GW

SUBJECT: MBFR: BUNDESWEHR RESTRUCTURING PLAN

REFS: (A) STATE 72004, (B) MBFR DEL A-015, MARCH 5, 1975

BEGIN SUMMARY: THE FRG PLANS TO MAINTAIN THE PEACETIME STRENGTH OF THE BUNDESWEHR AT THE CURRENTLY AUTHORIZED 495,000-MAN ACTIVE DUTY FORCE LEVEL. THE "READY RESERVE" COMPONENT WHICH IS ADDED TO THE ABOVE AUTHORIZED FORCE LEVEL CAN VARY BETWEEN 30-40,000 MEN DEPENDING UPON THE NUMBER OF CONSCRIPTS DISCHARGED FROM SERVICE IN ANY GIVEN QUARTER. FOLLOWING IMPLEMENTATION OF THE BUNDESWEHR RESTRUCTURING PLAN WHEN "SATISFACTORY RESULTS" HAVE BEEN REACHED IN THE MBFR NEGOTIATIONS, THE AUTHORIZED PEACETIME FORCE LEVEL WILL REMAIN AT 495,000 TO INCLUDE 465,000 MEN ON ACTIVE DUTY AND 30,000 MEN IN THE "STANDBY READINESS" FORCE.

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THE GERMANS DO NOT INTEND TO ADD THE "STANDBY READINESS"

FORCE COMPONENT TO THE ACTIVE DUTY FORCE LEVEL SINCE THE PURPOSE OF THE REFORM IS TO REALIZE OPERATIONAL COST SAVINGS AND THIS WOULD NOT BE ACHIEVED BY RAISING THE ACTIVE DUTY FORCE LEVEL. AS FOR PROSPECTIVE REDUCTIONS IN MBFR, CURRENT GERMAN THINKING IS THAT SUCH REDUCTIONS WOULD HAVE TO BE MADE IN THE ACTIVE DUTY FORCE LEVEL RATHER THAN IN THE "STANDBY READINESS" OR "READY RESERVE" FORCE COMPONENTS. MOREOVER, SUCH REDUCTIONS WOULD BE TAKEN BY THINNING OUT ARMY UNITS AND WOULD IN NO EVENT INVOLVE REDUCTIONS IN THE GERMAN AIR FORCE OR NAVY. END SUMMARY

1. WE ARE NOT AWARE OF ANY CHANGE IN GERMAN THINKING REGARDING THE MAINTENANCE OF THE PEACETIME ACTIVE DUTY FORCE LEVEL OF THE BUNDESWEHR AT ITS CURRENT LEVEL OF 495,000 MEN. THIS POINT WAS RECONFIRMED AGAIN THIS WEEK BY AN FMOD SOURCE RESPONSIBLE FOR FORCE STRUCTURE. CONFUSION MAY HAVE ARISEN FROM DIFFICULTY WITH THE TERMINOLOGY. THE "READY RESERVE" FORCE COMPONENT IS A VARIABLE FIGURE DIRECTLY DEPENDENT UPON THE NUMBER OF CONSCRIPTS DISCHARGED FROM THE BUNDESWEHR DURING ANY GIVEN QUARTER OF THE YEAR. APPROXIMATELY 200,000 MEN ARE DISCHARGED ANNUALLY FROM THE BUNDESWEHR, AND THE NUMBER DESIGNATED FOR THE "READY RESERVE" FORCE CAN FLUCTUATE BETWEEN 30-40,000. THESE MEN CAN BE CALLED UP BY THE DEFENSE MINISTER WITHIN 90 DAYS OF THE DATE OF THEIR DISCHARGE. THE 5,000 "READY RESERVES" MENTIONED IN REFS A AND B REPRESENT MOBILIZATION RESERVISTS ON SHORT TOURS OF ACTIVE DUTY FOR TRAINING.

2. THE FRG DOES NOT PLAN TO IMPLEMENT THE BUNDESWEHR STRUCTURAL REFORM CALLING FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A 30,000 MAN "STANDBY READINESS" FORCE UNTIL SUCH TIME AS "SATISFACTORY RESULTS" HAVE BEEN ATTAINED IN MBFR. THERE IS NO CHANGE IN THIS POSITION. THIS WAS THE PRINCIPAL POINT OF THE AGREEMENT REACHED BETWEEN DEFMIN LEBER AND CDU/CSU OPPOSITION LEADER MANFRED WOERNER WHICH ENABLED THE OPPOSITION TO SUPPORT THE GOVERNMENT'S REFORM PLAN. DEFMIN LEBER HAD ARGUED FOR THE "STANDBY

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READINESS" FORCE AS A MEANS WHEREBY THE FRG COULD SAVE MONEY ON OPERATIONAL COSTS AND THEN INVEST THE SAVINGS IN MODERN EQUIPMENT FOR THE BUNDESWEHR. IT THEREFORE MAKES NO SENSE TO ADD THE "STANDBY READINESS" FORCE TO THE AUTHORIZED PEACETIME LEVEL OF THE BUNDESWEHR, NOR IS IT THE GERMAN INTENTION TO DO SO.

3. AS FOR A WEU LIMITATION, WE UNDERSTAND THAT UNDER

THE TREATY THE BUNDESWEHR "MAY NOT" EXCEED THE 500,000
LEVEL. SHOULD THE GERMANS AT SOME FUTURE POINT WANT
TO EXCEED THE 500,000 FIGURE,

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THEY WOULD HAVE TO RECEIVE PERMISSION FROM
THE WEU SIGNATORIES AND PRESUMABLY NATO AS WELL.

4. REGARDING THE MANNER OF BUNDESWEHR REDUCTIONS,
ADMIRAL STEINHAUS TOLD US LAST WEEK THAT THE BUNDESWEHR
WOULD TAKE REDUCTIONS BY THINNING OUT ITS ACTIVE DUTY
ARMY UNITS RATHER THAN DISBANDING SUCH UNITS. THE
ADMIRAL DEFINITELY SEEMS TO HAVE SHIFTED FROM THE IDEA
EXPRESSED LAST YEAR THAT THE FRG WOULD PERHAPS TRADE
OFF ITS "STANDBY READINESS" FORCE FOR SOVIET ACTIVE
DUTY FORCE REDUCTIONS. THE ADMIRAL REITERATED THE

POINT THAT THE FRG INTENDS ONLY TO REDUCE ITS ARMY
AND IN NO EVENT WOULD CONSIDER REDUCTIONS IN THE AIR
FORCE OR NAVY. HE ALSO SAID THE FRG DID NOT INTEND
TO REDUCE EQUIPMENT. IN ELABORATING ON THIS POSITION,
STEINHAUS REFERRED TO THE SOVIET LAND FORCES AS

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CONSTITUTING THE PRINCIPAL THREAT, EMPHASIZING THAT
THE GROUND FORCES ARE THE ELEMENTS UPON WHICH WESTERN
REDUCTION EFFORTS SHOULD BE CONCENTRATED. THE ADMIRAL
CONTINUED THAT THERE WAS A PROBLEM MOVING LAND FORCES
QUICKLY FROM SPOT TO SPOT WHEREAS ANY AIR FORCE UNITS
WITHDRAWN BY THE EAST COULD EASILY AND QUICKLY BE
REINTRODUCED FROM THE SOVIET WMD'S.

5. STEINHAUS POINTED OUT THAT IN ACCORDANCE WITH NATO
GUIDELINES, WESTERN REDUCTIONS SHOULD NOT BE GREATER
THAN TEN PERCENT. NOTING THAT THE SIZE OF THE GERMAN
ARMY WAS 341,000, THE ADMIRAL SAID THAT THE GERMANS
COULD THEREFORE CONCEIVE OF A REDUCTION OF
APPROXIMATELY 34,000 MEN. STEINHAUS SAID THIS WAS
APPROXIMATELY THE SAME SIZE AS THE PROPOSED "STANDBY
READINESS" FORCE.

6. COMMENT: WE ARE NOT CERTAIN WHY STEINHAUS DREW THIS
PARTICULAR COMPARISON SINCE HE STATED PREVIOUSLY IN
THE CONVERSATION THAT FRG REDUCTIONS WOULD BE FROM
ACTIVE DUTY UNITS. HOWEVER, WE HAVE NOTED THAT THE
GERMANS CONTINUE TO SHOW RELUCTANCE TO BE PINNED DOWN
PRECISELY REGARDING HOW THEY WOULD IMPLEMENT THEIR
REDUCTIONS. END COMMENT

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